

EAST GREENWICH SCHOOL COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 17, 2006 SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

1. Call to Order

The East Greenwich School Committee met on Tuesday, January 17, 2006 in the East Greenwich High School Auditorium. The meeting was called to order by Chair Vincent Bradley at 7:05 p.m. Other members present were: Vice-Chair Merrill Friedemann, Steve Gregson, Dr. Al Ross, William Day, and Sue Cienki, as well as Superintendent Charles Meyers, Director of Administration Maryanne Crawford, Assistant Superintendent Helen O'Hara, and Mr. Robert Wilmarth. Mr. Martin was absent.

2. The meeting commenced with the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

3. State of District

a. Superintendent's Update-There were no Superintendent's Reports.

4. Public Comments for Items not on the Agenda

Mrs. Christine Mattos asked for information on the scholarship that she wants to set up. She noted that \$1000 is available. She also asked for job descriptions of central office administrative staff.

Eliza Stopa and Megan Nugent, Student Council Representatives, reported that they received a letter thanking them for their donation to their school that was damaged by Hurricane Katrina.

5. Recognitions

5.1 The following students were recognized for winning the Geography Bee at Cole Middle School: Laura Kulm - winner, David Ordog-second place and Breanna Lynch -third place

5.2 Under the direction of Donna Phillips, National Junior Honor Society advisor at Cole, Ken Cruise, Katherine Boyarski and Devon Annicelli were recognized for raising over \$800 for Cox Channel 3's auction for the Special Olympics.

5.3 Maryanne Crudale, Caroline Stabile, Nick Rath, and Frank Lenox were recognized by the RI Department of Education for participating in the Focus Group Review of the draft RI K-12 Grade Span Expectations in Science

5.4 Boys' and Girls' Cross Country Teams who contributed to the Class C Championships were recognized: Anna Greeley, Brooke Assad, Jennifer Belden, Annie McCarthy, Brile Anderson, Amanda Hallworth, Hayley Sullivan. Gideon Bautista, Cornelius McCaffrey, Akash Chogule, Matthew Colavita, Andrew Glod, Michael Pezzullo, Mark Feigen. Coaches Norm Monks and Charlotte Evasick were also congratulated.

5.5 Nina Mackta was recognized for being selected by the RI Mentoring Partnership to receive the excellence in Mentoring Award at a special reception and ceremony at the State House on Thursday, January 12, from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m.

6. Approval of Minutes

7. New Business

7.1a Appointments

Mr. Day made a motion which was seconded by Mrs. Cienki to

approve the following appointments:

7.1.1 Richard Ficazzola, custodian at East Greenwich High, effective 1-3-06

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7.1.2 Katherine Hall, paraprofessional at Frenchtown School, effective January 9, 2006. The motion passed unanimously.

7.1b Resignation

7.1.3 On a motion made by Mrs. Cienki and seconded by Dr. Ross, the Committee accepted the resignation of Leslie Lee as High School Band Advisor. The motion passed unanimously.

7.1c Parental Leave

7.1.4 On a motion made by Dr. Ross and seconded by Mr. Day, the Committee voted to approve the parental leave of Marcia Wicker, Science Teacher at Cole, from 1-30-06 until 3-31-06. The motion passed unanimously. Mr. Militello stated that they have a science substitute and she is doing well.

Mr. Gregson asked if the meeting was being recorded and if that was illegal. Mrs. Friedemann stated that the School Committee voted on the new equipment but never voted to tape the meetings. She stated that no members knew the meeting was being taped, and the public has to be advised. Dr. Ross feels that the meetings should not be recorded. Mr. Bradley stated that no one intended to do anything

without the permission of the body.

8. Presentation of the FY 07 Budget

The Superintendent presented a budget of \$29,481,353, an increase of 6.51% for the 2007 fiscal year, or \$1,802,940. He also specified the new positions being recommended: Director of Student Learning, Performance Based Graduation Requirement and senior project coordinator, Middle School Jazz Band Director, 0.3 Nurse at Hanaford, and a 0.5 accountant for central office. Mr. Meyers noted that there will be one less position to fund at Frenchtown. Mrs. Cienki asked for a budget format that could be followed easier. Dr. Ross stated that the School Committee needs to be comfortable with where the money is going. A lengthy discussion was had on unforeseen legal expenses this year and Mrs. Friedemann felt that more money needs to be budgeted in 2007 for this item. A discussion was also held on paying people to collect tickets at the door for home sports events. Mrs. Cienki suggested that volunteers be asked to do this. Mrs. Friedemann asked for job descriptions of the Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent and the Director of Administration. Dr. Ross feels that the new positions being requested need justification. He also asked about reducing the full time nursing positions at the schools once the students requiring extra nursing services leave the school. Mr. Gregson asked how he could relate the new budget to the technology plan. Mr. Meyers responded that there is \$25,000 for the wireless lab at the high school. There was a request for Mr. Nettik to be at a meeting to speak about new computers. Mr. Gregson also asked if maintenance was adequately funded. Mr. Bradley stated that

he would not vote for this budget tonight. He noted that he has a problem spending any more money for an accountant. He feels we should shift the thrust of what we do toward education. He feels that the budget needs accuracy, logic and salesmanship.

Mr. Robert Holbrook spoke about his concerns on the budget and stated that he is disappointed with the 6.5% increase, noting that the Town Council would like a 3% increase. He feels that budget goals should be accompanied by objectives which need to be defined and discussed. Mr. Holbrook asked for a set of performance standards, timeline and the person responsible for achievement or failure. He asked for a trend of where the dollars are increasing or decreasing, since the town is facing a lot of money for a new middle school, new police

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station and OSHA problems in the high school labs. He also asked the School Committee to identify actions they have taken to save money. Dr. Ross responded that we have no control over the amount of the pension contribution to the state. He added that since utilities are going up 14% and we are asking for a 6% increase, our kids are not getting something.

Mr. Anthony DellaGrotta stated that it would be helpful to have reconciliation from last year to this year. He asked if the school department had an internal control department that checks salaries and benefits of all employees.

Mrs. Judi Cavanaugh spoke about high attorney fees for a town this size.

Mrs. Christine Mattos stated that some figures on salaries and pensions were not correct.

9. International Trips for 2007: France in April, and Spain in June – Insurance Requirement

The school department attorney should look at the certificates of insurance for these trips before a vote is taken.

10. Out-of-State Ski Trip to Sunday River, Maine from February 3 to 5, 2006 for Cole Middle School

Mr. Day made a motion which was seconded by Dr. Ross to approve the ski trip to Maine. Mr. Gregson feels that students are not chaperoned as a group and therefore may put the school department at risk. Mr. Matt Oliverio responded that our insurance agent says we have coverage for these trips in any liability that may arise but we are not covered for criminal conduct. He also stated that if the chaperone outline is followed and meeting times for students are implemented if someone sprains an ankle, we will be covered. The motion passed unanimously.

11. Renewal of extension of lease with Varnum Continentals

Dr. Ross made a motion which was seconded by Mr. Day to approve the extension of the lease with the Varnum Continentals. The motion passed unanimously.

12. School Committee Concerns

No lights in the high school parking lot are a concern. Mr. Wilmarth stated that temporary lights are being installed and permanent light in the spring.

13. Public Comments for Items on the Agenda

There were no public comments.

14. On a motion made by Mrs. Cienki and seconded by Mr. Day, the Committee, being polled individually, voted unanimously to go into Executive Session at 9:30 p.m. under R.I.G.L. 42-46-5 (a) (1) (2) Special Education Litigation Issues, Personnel, Principal Contract Renewal, Contract Negotiations.

In Open Session at 11:50 p.m., Dr. Ross made a motion which was seconded by Mr. Day to seal the minutes of the January 17, 2006 Executive Session. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Virginia Giuliani

Secretary